

IN CONGRESS, JANUARY 1975

THE SEEING EYE

ANNUAL REPORT 1974-'75



FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

As the United States commemorates events that led to its national independence 200 years ago, it is fitting to pay tribute to the thousands of blind persons who have earned their own freedom from a special kind of tyranny — immobility and dependence. With the help of dog guides, or the use of canes, they have developed the self-assurance and motivation to take their rightful and useful places in society.

To help blind people acquire independence and a fuller life has been the basic purpose of The Seeing Eye since its founding in 1929. The note was sounded, in fact, the year before when Morris Frank, on completion of training with Buddy I in Switzerland, was heard to exclaim: "Now I have signed my own declaration of independence."

That feeling of breaking the bonds, to one degree or another, has been experienced by more than 4,000 persons who have obtained dog guides at The Seeing Eye. Hundreds of them have returned for replacements, assuring their mobility over long periods of time. During the past year, a 71-year-old graduate obtained his eighth dog; it was back in 1929, in the second Seeing Eye class, that he trained with his first. Another graduate, who received his first dog in 1930, and at age 89 is now the oldest Seeing Eye graduate, was adjusted with his sixth dog.

Acquisition of a Seeing Eye dog is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. That is a belief that has been central to the school's philosophy. The faithful dog provides the mobility that is so exhilarating to a blind person.

It is freedom of mobility that makes possible the carrying out of constructive purposes, the rebuilding of morale, the enhancement of dignity and self-respect and greater fulfillment of human potential.

Evidence grows every day of greater fulfillment of human potential. During the year, for example, The Seeing Eye received stories from the press of two graduates who completed their doctoral studies in psychology, one going into private practice as a psychologist, the other into teaching at the college level. Another graduate completed her fourth novel, and still another assumed full executive responsibilities for a large Boy Scout district.

Useful employment, of course, is perhaps the most visible manifestation of independence and life fulfillment for a blind person. In this respect, opportunities continue to expand as blind people gradually eradicate the stereotype of helpless dependents, thus fostering greater public acceptance of them as useful citizens.

The overwhelming majority of Seeing Eye graduates are usefully employed, whether as paid workers, homemakers or students preparing for careers. They hold jobs in well over 100 different fields of work, many of which once were thought to be out of the question for blind people.

The 198 individuals who received training during 1974-75 represented 30 different occupations or fields. The largest category, 38, was composed of students en route to the working world. They were followed by 21 homemakers, 16 industrial workers, 12 teachers and 11 clerical workers. There were also, to mention a few, five X-ray technicians, two computer programmers, two mechanics, an osteopath, a television producer and seven who own their own businesses.

Of the 198 graduates in 1974-75, 101 were new students "proclaiming their independence" for the first time, and 97 were obtaining replacement dogs to extend their independence. The students came from 35 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and Israel. The 19 Canadians reflected the growing interest among Canadians in The Seeing Eye's program and the school's expanding relations with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

As the fiscal year drew to a close, a new Executive Vice President took charge of the school's day-to-day operations. He was Stuart Grout, elected by the Board of Trustees to succeed George Werntz, Jr., who retired after 25 years of service with The Seeing Eye.

SERVING THE STUDENTS

For a blind person, achieving freedom of mobility and independence in partnership with a dog guide is a unique process requiring mental as well as physical adjustments. Playing a major role in this process is the **DIVISION OF STUDENT SERVICES** under the direction of Vice President Paula Pursley.

The division screens applicants for admission; sees to the students' comfort, health and general morale during their stay at the school; and helps them look ahead toward their goal of independence and life fulfillment. Miss Pursley, a tactful and sympathetic advisor, is always available in the privacy of her office to read a student's mail or discuss any bothersome questions.

Before any of this can happen, something else has to happen within the blind person himself. He must *want* to be independent, *want* to be free to go wherever he pleases whenever he pleases, *want* to take the necessary steps to achieve the goal. Not every blind person does. Studies show that many blind people lack the motivating desire for independent mobility. Others who do have the desire simply do not want a dog guide, but prefer to rely on systematic use of the cane. Still others are not physically suited to successful use of a dog guide.

The responsibility for selecting the blind persons to receive training at The Seeing Eye lies with the Student Services Division, usually in consultation with other divisions. Any blind person may apply, but to be accepted, he or she must meet certain requirements which The Seeing Eye has established as a result of long experience.

The first requirement is a *need* for a dog guide for some constructive purpose in life. Does the applicant need a dog to get to and from a job, or to run a household, or to attend school? The dogs used by The Seeing Eye are from the working breeds; if teamed with a master or mistress who has



The Seeing Eye's new Executive Vice President, Stuart Grout (left), talks with instructors in the school's headquarters building at Morristown, New Jersey.

no real purpose or need to be on the go, then the dog fails to fulfill its potential no less than its master does.

An applicant must be physically fit, emotionally stable, and neither too young nor too old. Young people under 16 are usually considered too immature to assume the responsibility for a dog guide; some persons over 55 may be unable to withstand the physical demands of the program. There are, of course, exceptions — usually at the upper age level.

A third requirement is willingness to accept responsibility for payment of a fee of \$150 for the first dog and \$50 for subsequent dogs. This policy, established early in Seeing Eye history, is based on sound rehabilitation reasons endorsed by the students themselves. They feel this nominal fee gives them a chance to share in the cost of their dogs and to earn their independence themselves. The fee covers the dog's equipment, the student's food and lodging while at the school and round-trip transportation to Morristown from anywhere in the United States and Canada. Students may pay the fee at their convenience, over a period of years if necessary. No applicant has ever been turned away for lack of funds.

Of the 198 students who completed their training during the 1974-75 fiscal year, 40 percent were women. The largest age group, with 39 students, was 19-23 years, followed by the 24-29 age group with 36. Many of the replacement students are becoming older: There were 18 aged 65 and above. The states with the largest representation continued to be New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



Robert Wichman, director-designate of The Seeing Eye's Scientific Breeding Station, checking pups bred by the school for guide work.

TRAINING THE DOG

Before the student arrives at the school, the dog goes through its own intensive training. The three-month program transforms the dog from a lively adolescent into a quietly competent adult, capable of being responsible for the safety of a human life.

The school obtains dogs by purchases, by donations, and through its own breeding program. This work is carried out by the **BREEDING AND PROCUREMENT DIVISION**. From its beginning in Switzerland, The Seeing Eye has depended most heavily on the German shepherd, because this breed has the combination of characteristics most adaptable for guide work. However, selected dogs of other breeds — the Labrador, the golden retriever and the boxer, for example — have also been used for many years. The majority of Seeing Eye dogs are spayed females and whatever the breed, the desired qualities are sound temperament and physique, appropriate size and strength, high intelligence and, above all, a strong sense of responsibility.

So far only German shepherds have been bred at The Seeing Eye's Scientific Breeding Station, 15 miles from Morristown. In recent years, close to half of all dogs assigned to blind persons have come from the station. At any one time, there are about 150 dogs at various stages of training in the kennels. Other younger dogs are "growing up" in New Jersey homes of 4-H Club members.

The "socializing" period in 4-H homes is an essential part of preparing dogs for guide work. The Seeing Eye has long recognized that life in a kennel does not offer the "real life" conditions which the dogs will encounter later with their masters. So, at the age of eight weeks, pups are turned over to 4-H youngsters to be raised in a home setting, under supervision of the Breeding and Procurement Division. When the dogs are about a year old, they are returned to the school to begin training.

At this point, the dogs become the responsibility of the **TRAINING DIVISION**, headed by Edward Myrose. Two principles are basic to the training approach: First, when the dog does something wrong, it must be corrected immediately and firmly; and second, when the dog does something right, it should be praised and given affection. In this way the animals learn what is required of them.

The first lessons given a Seeing Eye dog are in fundamental obedience — come, sit, down, rest, fetch. Then comes more complicated work in the special leather harness. Through the stiff leather handle on the harness, the dog will later tell its master what he needs to know about conditions in his path — whether to slow down, speed up, stop, or change direction. In the same manner, the master can tell whether the dog's head is turned toward a stray dog or other distraction, in which case corrective action must be taken.



N.Y. Daily News

Learning obedience commands, like "sit" ... and how to cope with traffic.



In Morristown the dogs are trained by instructors to stop at every corner so that the blind students can orient themselves before moving on.

Once these techniques are learned, the dog is driven to Morristown for exposure to street conditions. The dog gets an idea of what it's like to work in noise and traffic and learns to stop at every corner so that the blind person can orient himself before moving on. The dog develops the skill of judging heights, so that its master can avoid awnings or low-hanging branches. Finally, the hardest and most difficult lesson of all — called "intelligent disobedience" by the Training Division: The dog learns to say "no" to a command that may put its master in danger, such as an oncoming car.

Throughout the training, the dog is tested constantly, sometimes with its trainer blindfolded. Only after meeting The Seeing Eye's rigid standards is a dog assigned to a blind person.

The Breeding and Procurement Division looks to completion of new breeding facilities in the summer of 1976 and an expanded procurement program to increase the supply of dogs. Productivity is now lower than desired. During the year, 63 dogs bred at the station went out with graduates, 11 fewer than last year; and 144 pups were born at the station. After several months of service as manager of the Training Kennel at Headquarters, Robert Wichman moved to the Breeding Station as director-designate. He shared managerial responsibility with G. William Debetaz, who has been interim director and continues as consultant on the new breeding facilities. John Weagley, a veteran of 27 years service as Manager of the Breeding Station, retired during the year.

FORMING THE TEAM

For the blind person, the dream of freedom really begins to become a reality, of course, during the four-week training period. Under the tutelage of the Training Division, the student acquires the knowledge, the disciplines and the skills that enable him to form the loving and trusting human-dog relationship that brings independent mobility.

The efficacy of a partnership depends to a large extent on the initial matching of student with dog. From the moment they meet on the second day of the training period, they are together constantly. It is vital, therefore, that they are well-suited and comfortable with each other. Matching takes into account personalities, physiques and temperaments.



A difficult maneuver for the team to master—going through a revolving door.

The catalytic agent that makes the partnership work is the instructor. He trains the dog before the student arrives; then he trains student and dog together, molding them into a harmonious unit. This is a sensitive assignment that requires not only leadership ability, dog-handling skills and physical stamina, but also the emotional maturity, insight and articulateness essential to working successfully with handicapped persons of varied backgrounds.

The Training Division handled 29 classes, nine extra students and four "home turnovers" during the year, despite some losses from the instruction staff. Two instructors resigned, one was on sick leave for seven months and another was granted a 16-week leave to participate in the procurement program. With the addition of two apprentices, Sheryl Freshley and Sharon Griswold, and the planned addition of another in the coming year, the division expects to reach a capacity to handle 36 classes annually. In response to requests from graduates, the field work staff had contacts with 147 people. Of the dogs assigned to students during the year, 124 were German shepherds, 26 were Labradors, 15 were golden retrievers and 33 were of other or mixed breeds.

TRAINING THE TEAM

Until the student meets his future guide, the dog has known only one master — the instructor. Thus, there must be a transferral of the dog's loyalty, a delicate process. As the training progresses, the student and dog gradually acquire a "feel" for each other, and the instructor, alert to the changing feelings, deliberately fades into the background. Finally, the moment of transferral suddenly comes, usually near the end of the second week when the dog guides the student over the most difficult route in Morristown. The student instinctively knows that the dog is his — and the dog knows it, too.

With trust established, the student and dog now perform with more assurance. Steadily they master the difficult moves on the streets and in buildings and learn to "free lance" in restaurants and shopping centers, on bus and train trips and along country lanes where there are no curbs or sidewalks. They experiment with situations tailored to the student's needs at home. By the time the team has completed training, the blind person is well on his way to independent mobility and freedom. He is equipped to go anywhere he pleases.

SERVING IN THE FIELD

The division that perhaps understands best what freedom and independent mobility mean to blind people is the **FIELD SERVICES DIVISION**. Its representatives, Robert H. Whitstock, Vice President for Field Services, and David Loux, are Seeing Eye graduates themselves, and they are in continual contact with graduates, potential students and agencies that serve blind people. With their dog guides, they individually criss-cross the country and Canada, carrying The Seeing Eye message to professional groups, hospitals and nursing schools, and to the general public through television, radio and newspaper interviews in the localities they visit. In their talks, Mr. Whitstock and Mr. Loux explain how life can be enriched for certain blind persons through use of a dog guide.

Because the school feels it is important that professionals in services to blind people know about The Seeing Eye program and the benefits of dog guide use, Messrs. Whitstock and Loux participate in a variety of professional associations. During the year, Mr. Whitstock completed a successful two-year term as president of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, and also a term as a trustee of the American Foundation for the Blind. He is active with several committees concerned with research and develop-

ment, and in a program to provide closed-circuit radio service to blind people. Mr. Loux has concentrated on developing contacts with mobility specialists and rehabilitation teachers.

During the year, Messrs. Whitstock and Loux spent a combined total of 180 days in the field, traveling 64,000 miles in 24 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. They had 475 personal contacts, gave 120 talks, participated in 45 interviews and showed films 19 times. The growing interest in The Seeing Eye program was reflected in the distribution of 200 more cassettes of an interview with Mr. Whitstock. The interview, designed to answer questions blind people have about The Seeing Eye, has proved to be a successful information tool with social service agencies.



With a dog guide, shopping and other daily chores are easier for the homemaker.

TELLING THE STORY

To help the public understand how Seeing Eye dogs enable blind people to be independent, the school conducts a nationwide educational program through its **DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICES**. It speaks not only to the public at large but to a number of special "publics" — blind people, their families, ophthalmologists and other physicians, veterinarians, mobility specialists, agencies and, in fact, anyone who affects the welfare of blind people. The message is carried through television, radio, films, exhibits, books, magazines, newspapers and other literature.

An important element in the division's work is the effort to resolve specific problems encountered by dog guide users. Leaflets and booklets prepared by the division are designed to promote equal opportunity in such matters as employment and housing, and wider acceptance in such public places as restaurants, hotels and transportation facilities.

Television is an expanding outlet for information about The Seeing Eye. WNBC-TV presented a five-minute segment about the school on the evening news. A half-hour program on the breeding facilities and the 4-H program was completed for fall showing on ABC stations with an audience of more than five million households. The division produced two new TV spot announcements and distributed them to 479 stations; six new radio spots were distributed to 947 stations. In addition to arranging TV and radio interviews for David Loux, the division arranged for 21 TV showings of the film "Meeting the Challenge of Blindness." Seeing Eye films — four in all — were booked by 924 groups and organizations. Reporters from the largest Brazilian TV network, two large American newspapers and several magazines visited the school to gather information for stories. Several new informational booklets were printed and others were revised; The Seeing Eye Guide, with circulation of nearly 29,000, was distributed four times, as usual; and the 1973-74 Annual Report went to 17,553 persons.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Since 1958 The Seeing Eye has made grants to support research, training and development projects related to blindness and the health and care of dogs. The program is administered by the **GRANTS DIVISION** under Bruce A. Reid. A revolving seven-member Advisory Board, composed of outstanding authorities in the fields of Seeing Eye interests, reviews the proposals and guides the Board of Trustees in making the grants.

Over the past 18 years, The Seeing Eye has made grants totalling \$7,455,398. More than half of the funds have gone to the field of ophthalmic research, a medical discipline that is widely regarded as under-funded. The other major fields covered by the program are veterinary medicine, orientation and mobility, and rehabilitation, educational and vocational opportunities for blind people.

Funding for grants during the year, \$202,148, was less than half the amount of the year before and the lowest since 1966. The general economic situation was responsible for this decrease. Of the total funding, \$119,000 went to three projects for which the school had commitments in the form of unfulfilled pledges. The field of ophthalmology received more than 70 percent of the grants for manpower support, equipment and construction. Orientation and mobility seminars were made possible for seven universities. Partial funding was provided for the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind for a rehabilitation study. And the American Printing House for the Blind received a grant toward completing a braille chemistry code project.

Computer programming is one of the many fields in which Seeing Eye graduates are finding employment after they gain independent mobility.



The Seeing Eye, Inc.

annual report 1974-1975

September 30, 1975 STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND FUNDS

	General Unrestricted	Donor Restricted
Assets:		
Cash	\$ 391,459	\$ 25,770
Accrued interest receivable	198,828	3,514
Investments in securities (total market value \$21,108,000) (Note 1)	18,961,228	1,577,083
Receivables and prepaid expenses	<u>6,502</u>	
Properties (Note 1):		
Land	207,006	
Buildings	1,470,676	
Buildings under construction	340,793	
Furniture and equipment	<u>84,729</u>	
	2,103,204	
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>446,530</u>	
	1,656,674	
	<u>\$21,214,691</u>	<u>\$1,606,367</u>
Liabilities and fund balances:		
Accounts payable	\$ 57,408	
Accrued expenses	<u>45,794</u>	
Fund balances (Note 3):		
Designated by the Board of Trustees for:		
Security Fund	1,298,034	
Security Endowment Fund	187,153	
Completion of Construction of Scientific Breeding Farm	434,207	
Undesignated, available for general activities	17,535,421	
Invested in properties	1,656,674	
Restricted by donors		\$1,606,367
Total fund balances	<u>21,111,489</u>	<u>1,606,367</u>
	<u>\$21,214,691</u>	<u>\$1,606,367</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part
of the financial statements.

Year Ended September 30, 1975
**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT, REVENUES,
AND EXPENSES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES**

	General Unrestricted	Donor Restricted
Public support and revenues:		
Public support:		
Legacies ..	\$ 672,692	\$ 343,849
From trusts ..	89,774	3,487
Contributions	<u>23,596</u>	
Total public support	<u>786,062</u>	<u>347,336</u>
Revenues:		
Dividend and interest income	1,131,917	72,336
Net loss on sale of securities	(836,556)	(42,464)
Student payments	14,323	
Other	<u>1,065</u>	
Total revenues	<u>310,749</u>	<u>29,872</u>
Total public support and revenues	<u>1,096,811</u>	<u>377,208</u>
Expenses:		
Program services:		
Student services	256,249	
Dog breeding and procurement	241,779	
Dog training	380,239	
Dietary, household, and grounds	190,022	
Public and professional information services	149,840	
Grants	<u>202,148</u>	
Total program services	<u>1,420,277</u>	
Supporting services:		
Grants administration	21,777	
General and administrative	258,741	
Replacements and minor additions	12,404	
Investment counsel fee	<u>26,091</u>	1,686
Total supporting services	<u>319,013</u>	<u>1,686</u>
Total expenses	<u>1,739,290</u>	<u>1,686</u>
Excess (deficiency) of public support and revenues over expenses	(642,479)	375,522
Fund balances,		
September 30, 1974	21,702,472	1,282,341
Income from investments transferred from restricted funds	<u>51,496</u>	<u>(51,496)</u>
Fund balances, September 30, 1975	<u>\$21,111,489</u>	<u>\$1,606,367</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part
of the financial statements.

The Seeing Eye, Inc.

Year Ended September 30, 1975
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

	Program Services	Supporting Services
Salaries	\$ 584,687	\$162,741
Employee benefits, payroll taxes, etc.	133,292	39,608
Dog procurement and boarding	38,309	
Dog food, veterinary, and medicine	76,921	
Kennel supplies, expenses, and equipment	13,416	
Student expense and transportation	36,220	
Food and laundry ..	36,864	12,287
Insurance	16,555	1,429
Real estate taxes	29,816	2,078
Fuel, light, and water	27,524	3,485
Telephone and telegraph	5,483	4,546
Repairs and maintenance	12,662	17,670
Public relations expenses	113,462	
Grants	202,148	
Legal and professional fees		16,002
Investment counsel fee		27,777
Travel and auto expense	34,405	4,822
Other	25,601	20,026
Total expenses before depreciation	1,387,365	312,471
Depreciation of buildings and equipment	32,912	8,228
Total expenses	<u>\$1,420,277</u>	<u>\$320,699</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part
of the financial statements.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Year Ended September 30, 1975

1 — The following is a summary of significant accounting policies of The Seeing Eye, Inc.:

a — Major acquisitions of property are capitalized at cost. Depreciation is computed on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets. Minor additions and replacements are treated as expenses of the General Unrestricted Fund.

b — Investments in securities are stated at cost or donated value in a common investment pool, unless the organization believes that a decline in market value represents a permanent impairment of the value of such securities. Income earned on and gains or losses in respect to sales of securities are allocated to each fund on the basis of its relative interest in the common investment pool.

c — Production costs of films and brochures are charged to expense in the year incurred.

d — All full-time employees after one year of service are covered under a group annuity pension plan provided they have not reached their 55th birthday on entering the plan. Pension plan costs accrued are funded (Note 2).

2 — The cost of the pension plan for the year was \$76,530; all past service cost has been funded. The provisions of the pension plan are currently being studied in the light of requirements of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. Consideration is being given to fuller integration of the plan with the Social Security system. Revisions of the plan will be subject to the Board of Trustees' approval. If approved, the implementation of requirements of the Act and fuller integration of the plan with the Social Security system is expected to reduce pension cost in future periods.

3 — The Seeing Eye, Inc. has agreed to support, by annual grants of \$50,000, a research professor for the remainder of his career as an ophthalmic investigator at Johns Hopkins University.

**REPORT OF INDEPENDENT
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS**

*To the Board of Trustees of
The Seeing Eye, Inc.
Morristown, New Jersey*

We have examined the statement of assets, liabilities, and funds of The Seeing Eye, Inc. as of September 30, 1975 and the related statements of support, revenues, and expenses, and changes in fund balances and of functional expenses for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the statements identified above present fairly the financial position of The Seeing Eye, Inc. at September 30, 1975 and the results of its operations and changes in fund balances for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

HURDMAN AND CRANSTOUN
Certified Public Accountants

*140 Broadway
New York, New York 10005
October 22, 1975*

THE SEEING EYE, INC.

OFFICERS

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President

Landon Peters
Treasurer

Stuart Grout
*Executive Vice President
and Assistant Secretary*

Wallace S. Jones
Secretary

Bruce A. Reid
*Assistant Treasurer
and Vice President*
Miss Marian Jobson
Vice President
Miss Paula Pursley
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** Member of Executive Committee.*

THE SEEING EYE, INC.
Morristown, New Jersey